653

cost 22 lakhs to construct, and the road from Kashmīr to Gilgit cost, in the first instance, 15 lakhs. In 1901 the construction of a cart-road from Jammu to Udhampur was sanctioned. In 1905–6 the utilization of the Jhelum river for a great electric power scheme was taken in hand, and 4·6 lakhs was spent on it. The State Engineer is usually an officer lent by the British Government; and the State is divided into eight divisions, known as Kashmīr, Jammu, the Jhelum valley, Gilgit, Udhampur cart-road, Palace, Jhelum power, and Jammu irrigation.

704 [652]

Army.

The expenditure on the army is heavy, amounting to nearly 14 lakhs in 1905–6, but the administration is sound and economical, and there is considerable efficiency. The State has splendid materials for an army, as the Dogrās are, in the opinion of competent authorities, second to none in martial qualities. The commander-in-chief up to the year 1900 was assisted by a British officer as military adviser. The first military adviser was Colonel (afterwards Sir) Neville Chamberlain, to whose energy and tact the State owes its present efficient and well-equipped force. The army consists of two mountain batteries, one horse artillery and one garrison battery, one squadron Kashmīr Lancers, one troop body-guard cavalry, 7 regiments of infantry, and 4 companies of sappers and miners, with a total strength of 6,283. Out of this the State maintains a force of 3,370 Imperial Service troops, the remainder being called regular troops. Jammu, the winter capital, has a strong garrison. Imperial Service troops are stationed at Satwāri cantonment, about 5 miles from Jammu, on the opposite bank of the Tāwi river. Two regiments of regular infantry and a garrison battery are stationed at Srīnagar, and small detachments of infantry are detailed from this garrison for Bandipura, Leh, Skārdu, Padar, and various other posts. The troops in Gilgit, the northernmost part of the State, consist of two regiments of Imperial Service infantry, a battery of four mounted guns, and two companies of the Kashmīr sappers and miners. Detachments of infantry are supplied to the frontier posts of Gupis, Chilās, &c., and the battery is stationed at Bunji and Ruttoo. The troops at the Gilgit, Ladākh, and Skārdu frontiers are relieved biennially. The Imperial Service infantry regiments are armed with Lee-Metford rifles, and the regular regiments with Enfield-Sniders. The mountain batteries are equipped with 2·5 inch guns, and the cavalry are armed with lances and carbines. A number of forts partially armed are scattered all over the country. The State army is commanded by General Rājā Sir Amar Singh, K.C.S.I., younger brother of the Mahārājā.

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir AV1
Dard AV3

D 643 576 frontier. It was a motley crowd and picturesque, but I was glad when, after passing the fort, we were conducted to the house built in Major Biddulph's day, and left there in peace.

D 643 K 704 The next few days were spent in making acquaintance with the Governor and the members of the Committee, which consisted of the General commanding at Gilgit, the General commanding the regular reinforcements, the Sunadés or officer commanding the irregular troops, and of a couple of high civil officials, the most important of all being Mehta Sher Singh, an old gentleman of high family and position in Kashmir. The ablest among these gentlemen was, perhaps, the Governor, who had held his post for eight years, was heartily sick of it, and was most anxious to settle matters with Hunza and Nagar somehow, and to be permitted to return to Kashmir. He was an adept at intrigue, the threads of all the frontier affairs were in his hand, and the puppets on both sides of the border generally danced at his bidding.

K 648 My position was difficult; I had distinct orders not to give advice, but I could see very well that, if the negotiations going on failed, the Committee would come to me for it, and that whatever decision they came to, the onus would be thrown on me. Every endeavour was of course made to throw dust in my eyes, and to prevent my getting information as to what had really happened, why the tribes had broken out, what was going on at the moment and as to the condition of the troops. I was told, however, and I knew the information was true, that between Astor and Nomal, the fort eighteen miles

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4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir AV1

712 north of Gilgit, then the last Kashmir outpost
704 towards Hunza and Nagar, the Durbar had a force
[705] of eight thousand men. I knew, what I was not intended to know, that the men were half starved, fed on the worst form of grain, the food-grain which ought to have been in the granaries having been fraudulently made away with, and that there was only a month's food for the troops on the Gilgit side of the Indus, and no carriage to bring on any more. The Durbar had poured hundreds of tons of grain into Astor, which was easy enough to do, but had left it to the local authorities to forward this to Gilgit, a task, with their then resources, impossible of accomplishment.

704 I have before described the want of system which
705 existed, so I was not surprised at what I saw *en*
[164] *route* and at Gilgit. Here I found the Kashmir regiments scattered all about the valley in orchards, a sensible enough measure, as they had suffered considerably from cholera, but without a semblance of military precautions being taken. The senior officers never visited their men, not once were the troops under arms during my stay, and I do not think they had ever been properly fallen in since they had left Kashmir. Some days after my arrival at Gilgit nine hundred men were despatched unarmed, without an escort even, and without one single superior officer, four marches back, to fetch up for themselves a month's grain. The day before I arrived the troops were issued a day's supply of good flour to disarm enquiry on my part, but, as a rule, their food was vile, and the men received nothing but two pounds of unground grain, absolutely no extras, not even salt.

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir AV1
Dard AV3

What could be done with troops so treated? The men were well enough, and, poor wretches, looked eagerly to my coming to relieve them of their misery. Some of the officers were keen, but peculation and corruption were rampant; the honest men, if they existed, had no chance, and the condition of the force was deplorable.

If from the military point of view things were bad, from the civil they were no better. The Durbar was robbed by every official from the highest to the lowest; granaries that should have been full of good grain were empty, or full of rubbish substituted for a consideration, bribery and corruption ruled the land, disloyalty and treachery were in its high places. The man to send warning to the Hunza-Nagar forces, when after the capture of Chaprot they had advanced south and were besieging Nomal, the last Kashmir fort between them and Gilgit, of the advance of the Kashmir troops to its relief, was the Governor of Gilgit's right-hand man, Wazir Ghulam Haidar. Every one knew this, yet he was still employed and passed backwards and forwards between both sides, apparently the trusted servant of the Governor. A more villainous-looking scoundrel I never saw. He came one day, bringing the sons of the Raja of Nagar, who had come as ambassadors from their father, to see me. One of them had some years before been made Rá or Chief of Gilgit by the Durbar, the old line of chiefs having died out, and he having married the last surviving girl belonging to it. He had distinguished himself by bolting from Gilgit and leading the attack of the Nagar forces on Chaprot some months before. I thought

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir AV1

had been marching steadily for four months and a half from the time we left Kashmir, and had covered nearly a thousand miles.

In a few days Robertson passed through on his way to India, Younghusband followed him shortly after, having safely accomplished the object of his mission, and Manners-Smith and I settled down to our first winter in Gilgit. Within a month the first heavy snowfall of the year came down, hermetically sealing the passes in our rear, and we were left, two solitary Englishmen, shut up in the wilds of Hindu-Kush. For weeks at a time no letters were to reach us; for six months the great snow barrier would prevent all possibility of help from India in case of trouble, and all that I had to rely on in the shape of an armed force was a body of two hundred Gurkhas of the newly-organised Kashmir Imperial Service Troops. Though of excellent material this little body was entirely undisciplined, untrained, and ignorant of the use of the rifles served out to it. The outlook was, however, peaceful, and I relied with confidence on the result of my visits to the neighbouring states. My confidence was not misplaced, and the winter passed quietly.